प्रश्न संख्या
Question No.

U.P.S.C.

इस भाग में कुछ न लिखें
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Registration Number: 36221

Test Number: 1415

GS Mains Test Series 2020 — 15 Nov 2020

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(1)

Food subsidy through PDS amounts to more than ~~1.5% of~~ 0.5% of India's GDP. As such, DBT has been proposed.

Advantages of DBT instead of food supply are:

- Better targeting of beneficiaries
- Rationalization of food subsidy
- Reduced corruption due to technology
- Enhanced transparency and accountability.
- Food wastage in FCI godowns can be prevented
- Distorted agricultural practices (of growing only wheat and paddy) can be rectified

Disadvantages of DBT are:

- Lack of digital infrastructure to verify beneficiaries adequately
- Might lead to inclusion and exclusion errors
- Can lead to agrarian distress as farmers depend on government procurement for PDS.
- Money can be misused by men for alcohol and other sin activities
- Lack of capacity of private sector to supply foodgrains to remote areas
- PDS has helped remove hunger to a large extent.

DBT should be rolled in only after public consultations.

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(2)

Participatory budgeting refers to the process where citizens actively participate in formulation of budget and ancillary activities.

Challenges associated with participatory budgeting in India are:

- Lack of technical and financial know-how of government budgeting among citizens
- Lack of political will
- Bureaucratic apathy
- Opacity and secrecy associated with several budget line items, especially those relating to national security.
- Difficult to conduct this exercise in such a large country as India with 1.38 billion people.
- Lack of funds to undertake this exercise
- Lack of awareness among public as they don't make this demand; in some cases, even public apathy.
- Lack of institutional or legal framework

Participatory budgeting can help usher in a new era of grassroots democracy.

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(3)

Inclusive growth refers to all sections of society becoming active agents in growth and development process. It does not depend on "trickle-down" economics.
However, Universal Basic Income (UBI) requires high taxes from the rich and redistribution of this wealth among all.
Thus, at first glance, it seems that inclusive growth negates the need for UBI. This is because:

- When all sections, even backward sections, participate in and reap the benefits of growth, UBI may become unnecessary.
- When all sections prosper, burden of taxation for UBI would fall on all sections. This would partially offset the benefit from UBI, and therefore negate its need.
- When all sections prosper, UBI may become irrelevant as the "basic" income provided under UBI may only be a small portion of income under inclusive growth.

However, UBI can help reinforce inclusive growth because:

- It will increase risk-taking appetite and entrepreneurship among lower sections, thus helping their growth.
- UBI can help provide social security and insurance against mishaps.

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↳ UBI can help in wealth redistribution and thus help the process of inclusive growth.

UBI has been backed by Economic Survey and should be given serious consideration.

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(4)

E-commerce can help revamp agricultural marketing because:

↳ Monopoly of middlemen and traders will decrease

↳ Farmers will be able to get remunerative prices

↳ Farmers can sell their produce to anyone (not restricted to their mandi)
Ex: e-NAM (electronic - National Agricultural Market)

↳ It can boost agricultural exports

↳ Private sector can come in with more funds, skilled manpower, technical expertise ~~can~~ and digital infrastructure

↳ Resilient farm-to-fork supply chains can be established.

↳ Currently, agriculture is a buyer's market, with agricultural traders setting the prices. With e-commerce, it can become seller's market, with farmers setting prices

↳ It can promote Food Processing Industries

↳ It can help improve distorted agricultural practices of growing only wheat and paddy.

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↳ Even livestock can be traded (Eg: Animall.com)

↳ It can promote investments in agri-logistics and storage solutions.

↳ It can reduce agricultural distress.

e-commerce should be brought in agricultural marketing with adequate safeguards for farmers.

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(5)

How digital financial services can expand financial inclusion in India:

- High tele-density in India of more than 90% means that digital financial services can be accessed universally.
- Brick-and-mortar branches not needed
- Digital services are cheaper for banks to provide than physical services
- Even remote, inaccessible locations can be served.

However, challenges in providing digital financial services are:

- Lack of funds
- Lack of skilled IT manpower in remote locations
- Lack of digital infrastructure, especially in remote underbanked areas
- Digital illiteracy
- Cyber crimes ~~and~~ like phishing, hacking, etc. create fear among public
- NPA problems in banks prevents them from investing in digital services.
- Poor internet connectivity in remote areas
-

JAM trinity is a laudable step in this regard.

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(6)

The two laws that were used to deal with COVID-19 pandemic are:

- Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897
- Disaster Management Act, 2005

How India's domestic laws are ill-equipped to deal with infectious diseases:

- Epidemic Diseases Act is a colonial era law that focuses on giving wide-ranging powers to government rather than addressing infectious disease
- Disaster Management Act has no mention of infectious diseases. It only has limited provisions relating to Biological Disaster.
- Epidemics and Pandemics do not find mention in any list of Seventh Schedule, which creates confusion
- Disaster Management Act gives sweeping powers to Union government, which results in:
  - Non-consultation with States
  - one-size-fits-all approach by Centre
  - lack of customisation according to local factors.
- Current legal framework does not address the following:
  - Quarantining the infected

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↳ Isolating virus/bacteria strain

↳ Protocol for lab tests and safety

↳ Hierarchy or institutional framework for identification of pathogen, vaccine development or other activities in an emergency.

The current legal framework needs to be suitably amended in line with international best practices and India's own experience.

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Why private sector participation is needed in space sector in India:

↳ To bring in more funds

↳ To bring in more skilled manpower

↳ To find novel uses for space technology
(ex: using NAVIC for local grocery delivery)

↳ To democratise space infrastructure

↳ To commercialise space technology

↳ To use space technology for welfare of public

↳ Private sector has worked well in foreign countries; ex: SpaceX in USA

↳ To effect technology transfer from ISRO to private sector

↳ To manufacture Small ~~Sat~~ Satellite launch Vehicle (SSLV)

↳ To create high value-addition skilled jobs

↳ To transform India into knowledge economy

↳ Specific uses for private sector:
  ↳ Communication, broadcasting, etc.
  ↳ Navigation
  ↳ Earth-observation (ex: mineral exploration)

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Steps taken by government in this regard are:

- Creation of New Space India Limited (NSIL)
- NSIL to partner with private sector
- Small Space Launch Vehicle (SSLV) to be manufactured by NSIL and private sector
- New Department to regulate private sector in space sector
- Space technology to be transferred to private sector by ISRO.

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(8)

When a significant portion (more than 30-40%) of the population has been infected and has recovered from an infectious disease, herd immunity is said to have developed as pathogen cannot easily find an uninfected host and the disease becomes less prevalent.

Relying on herd immunity to stop infectious diseases has following problems:

- leads to widespread deaths (30-40% of population has to get infected and a significant number will have to die before herd immunity kicks in)
- Overloads medical infrastructure as all patients cannot be treated simultaneously
- Increases mortality rate of infection as all patients not provided medical attention
- Basically a do-nothing and non-proactive approach which has no place in modern society
- Violative of fundamental Right to Life
- Often, the poor and marginalized sections are most vulnerable in this approach

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↳ Can lead to huge economic disruption due to high case load

↳ Re-infections and loss of immunity after sometime can render this approach unusable.

Active government intervention is necessary to stop infectious diseases.

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(9)

Comprehensive Convention of International Terrorism (CCIT) is an India-backed Convention that was presented to UN in 1996. It is pending ever since.

Reasons for this impasse are:

↳ USA is worried that atrocities committed by it ~~are~~ in Middle East can be categorized as terrorism

↳ West Asian Countries like Saudi Arabia and Iran are worried that their actions in Yemen, Iraq and other places can be categorized as terrorism.

↳ Pakistan is worried as it is a state sponsor of terrorism.

↳ No global agreement on definition of terrorism

Implications of this impasse are:

↳ Creation and proliferation of terror groups like ISIS, Al-Qaeda, Haqqani Network, etc.

↳ Concerted global action not possible against terrorism

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↳ Terror bombings in France, Belgium, Sri Lanka, etc., can be attributed to this impasse

↳ Countries like Pakistan keep sponsoring terror groups due to lack of global action.

CCIT needs to be deliberated upon and accepted as soon as possible.

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(10)

Complexity of border challenges include border patrolling, combating interventions by foreign nations, development of border areas, smuggling and terror activities, etc.

Why reform is needed in BSF:

- To improve coordination between various border forces, intelligence agencies and army.
- To incorporate technology on Indo-Pak border and Indo-Bangladesh border.
- To improve morale of BSF personnel
- To incorporate ~~idea~~ idea of "One Border, One Force".
- BSF personnel ~~war~~ have poor work conditions which need to improve
- ~~BSF Commander~~ DG, BSF should be from within BSF instead of an IPS officer.
- Skilled manpower needs to be inducted into BSF for induction of technology
- More fund allocation for BSF.
- Acquisition of arms, ammunitions and protective gear in ample quantities

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↳ Border infrastructure needs to be developed, including border roads and CIBMS (Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System) to further strengthen BSF.

BSF should be reformed to tackle border issues.

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(11)

India's ambivalence on privatization can be seen from the following:

↳ Since 1991, several sectors have been deregulated and opened up for private sector.

However, significant presence of public sector still remains, especially in financial ~~sect~~ sector, civil ~~avia~~ aviation, railways, highways (roadways), etc.

↳ Divestment targets for PSUs have been announced several times.

However, divestment targets are often not met. Many a times, government holding is sold to LIC, which is not actually privatization.

Also, several new PSUs keep coming up.

Why India has been reluctant to go for full-fledged privatization:

↳ Can lead to loss of jobs in PSUs

↳ lack of political will

↳ Can lead to regional disparities as private sector will often be situated in regions with good infrastructure.

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↳ Unwillingness to cede market control in some areas like petroleum marketing, etc.

↳ Charges of crony capitalism

↳ Distrust of private sector

↳ Safeguarding national interests, especially in areas like defence manufacturing

↳ International experience, as in poor performance of British railways after privatisation.

↳ National security concerns prevents atomic energy from being privatized.

↳ Infrastructural requirements prevents NHAI and AAI, along with others, from being privatized.

↳ lack of market development prevents DISCOMs from being privatized.

Why India still considers privatization necessary:

↳ "Government has no business of being in business" is the accepted policy stance

↳ Maxim of minimum government, maximum governance

↳ Private sector brings in efficiency, funds, skilled manpower, technology transfer, etc.

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↳ Privatization can increase employment and economic growth

↳ Wastage of tax money on loss-making and inefficient PSUs can be avoided.

Recent government policy of privatizing all except a few sectors is a landable step.

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(12)

Potential of MSEs in food processing sector ~~are:~~ is as follows:

- This sector is labour-intensive
- This sector requires less capital investment to get started
- This sector enjoys government support in the form of capital subsidy, interest subvention, credit guarantee, etc.
- Skills required for this sector are already abundant in Indian labour.

However, challenges faced by MSEs in food processing sector are as follows:

- lack of access to credit
- lack of access to capital and technology
- lack of skilled manpower for ~~sa~~ management
- lack of marketing promotion and assistance
- lack of access to quality produce
- Poor agri-logistics and storage
- Essential Commodities Act acts as a deterrent for bulk procurement of raw materials
- lack of awareness of government schemes

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↳ Poor implementation of government policies like Mega food Parks scheme with hub-and-spokes model

↳ Poor knowledge about food processing and value-addition

↳ Poor backward and forward linkages

Importance of scheme for formalisation of Micro food Processing Enterprises:

↳ It will help in access to credit

↳ Access to technology and skilled manpower

↳ Access to infrastructure and common-use facilities

↳ Marketing promotion, development and assistance

↳ Can provide employment for those in agriculture sector

↳ Can grant them exemption from hoarding limit under Essential Commodities Act

Food Processing Sector is an important sector to ensure agricultural growth.

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(13)

World Bank has said that India faces a situation of water stress, which can soon turn to water scarcity.

Significance of micro-irrigation:

- Good alternative to flooding of farms, especially in water scarce regions
- Increases absorption by plants
- Reduces wastage through evaporation and leakage and runoff.
- Can reduce water pollution
- Supports the maxim of Per drop, more crop
- Can reduce groundwater exploitation
- Can reduce monsoon risk
- Can lead to sustainable agriculture

However, challenges with regards to its adoption are:

- ~~the~~ High initial investment
- Agrarian distress and poor small & marginal farmers reduce investment ability.
- ~~lat~~ Lack of awareness among farmers
- Lack of technology in India
- May not be suitable for crops like paddy where flooding of field is required.
- Can lead to growth of weeds
- lack of skilled manpower to properly implement micro-irrigation.

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↳ Poor implementation of government schemes like PM Krishi Sinchayee Yojana which has micro-irrigation component

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(14)

Significance of energy technology innovation is as follows:

↳ Can improve energy efficiency
Ex: CFL and LED lamps consume less energy

↳ Can increase use of renewable energy, especially solar and wind

↳ Can clean up conventional sources, like Coal washing, Coal gasification, etc.

↳ Can increase output of mines and oil fields
Ex: Injecting CO_2 in oil fields

↳ Can provide energy in remote areas
Ex: off-grid solar in hilly regions

↳ Can make energy afferdable
Ex: Solar tariffs at record low rates

↳ Can lower Greenhouse Gas emissions and help combat climate change
Ex: Natural Gas usage

↳ Can solve problem of intermittency of solar and wind through battery solutions

↳ Can lead to increase in use of bio-fuel, which can be Carbon Capture, Utilization & Storage (CCUS)

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↳ Can help meet SDGs by providing accessible, affordable and clean energy to all.

Steps taken by government in this regard are:

↳ Perform, Achieve and Trade (PAT) scheme to increase energy efficiency

↳ Star-rating of appliances by Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) for better conservation

↳ Setting up of BEE under Ministry of Power

↳ NITI Aayog involved in energy technologies like Batteries, Methanol, Natural Gas, etc.

↳ Use of biofuel being promoted through PM-JIVAN scheme

↳ National Solar Mission

↳ National Mission for Energy Efficiency

↳ National Wind Mission

↳ National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy

↳ Ocean Energy, Geothermal Energy, Tidal Energy being tapped and targeted

Energy technology innovation should be an important part of energy policy.

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(15)

Atmanirbhar Bharat refers to self-reliant India. It is the policy propounded in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic.
However, Atmanirbhar Bharat goes beyond traditional view of self-reliance.

Traditional view of self-reliance	Atmanirbhar Bharat
↳ All production done within India	↳ India becomes part of global value chains (GVCs)
↳ Import substitution	↳ Free and liberalized trade policy
↳ Isolationism from the world	↳ Fully integrated into global economy
↳ Protectionism for domestic industry from global competition	↳ Healthy competition between domestic and foreign companies
↳ Elements of command economy	↳ Principles of free market followed
↳ Global capital flow restricted	↳ FDI encouraged; technology transfer promoted.

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↳ Movement of labour restricted	↳ Freedom of labour movement
↳ Controls on domestic companies to produce desired goods	↳ Minimum government, maximum governance with as little regulation ~~as~~ and restriction as possible

Atmanirbhar Bharat ties well with India's policy of Make in India, Skill India, etc. As such, it should be promoted.

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(16)

Increased frequency and intensity of climate extremes (like floods, droughts, heat waves, etc.) can have following implications:

- Destruction of property due to floods, cyclones, etc.
- Loss of human lives if preparedness is poor
- Food security impacted due to floods and droughts
- Poor and vulnerable most impacted because of lack of social security and insurance
- Can affect groundwater levels and surface drainage (rivers)
- loss of biodiversity, especially critically endangered species
- Increase in poverty
- Negative economic growth and losses in development
- Social tensions for meagre resources, which can even lead to international conflicts, especially over trans-boundary rivers

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- Some measures that can be taken for climate-resilience are:

↳ Agriculture
  ↳ less water guzzling crops
  ↳ Micro-irrigation
  ↳ Hardy, drought-resistant crop varieties

↳ Industry
  ↳ less water-intensive manufacturing
  ↳ Circular economy
  ↳ Resource efficiency

↳ International Collaboration
  ↳ ~~Coalition for~~ Paris Climate Agreement
  ↳ Sustainable Development Goals

↳ Raising awareness of public

↳ Mitigation and adaption measures need to be implemented

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(17)

Currently, flood control in India is done in piece-meal manners:

- Drainage infrastructure maintained at district level and at the level of local bodies
- Lack of coordination between adjacent regions
- Unplanned development and urbanization
- Ad-hoc flood control measures and reactive approach (measures after flood has occured)

Why integrated basin management is needed:

- Basin is the natural unit of water management. Districts and local bodies are artificial units.
- Basin Management is the scientifically-correct approach.
- What happens in one part of the basin often affects other parts of basin.
- Isolated interventions will be rendered ineffective if basin management is lacking.

How integrated basin management can be carried out:

- Creating water sponges and water sinks like ponds, lakes, etc.

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↳ Even the idea of sponge cities (sub-urban areas that can absorb flood water) has been proposed.

↳ Early Warning System and sensors need to be installed all along the basin.

↳ Afforestation all along the basin

↳ Diversion channels to take water from one part of the basin and transfer it safely to another part

↳ Dredging to remove silt and deepen channel all across the basin

↳ Flood Zoning and Land Use Restrictions to mitigate damage from floods.

↳ Flood water can be used for groundwater recharge

↳ Preventing flood plain encroachment to reduce risk.

All these measures can reduce damage from floods.

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(18)

In the wake of COVID-19 pandemic, Convalescent Plasma Therapy evolved wherein plasma from an infected, cured and immune individual is extracted and injected into other patients to induce immunity.

Potential uses of convalescent plasma therapy are:

- Can provide instant immunity from infectious disease.
- Less expensive than other options
- Has yielded positive results in some COVID cases

Concerns in its application are:

- Not scientifically proven
- Can lead to plasma rejection
- Can lead to severe viral and other infections
- Positive results may be due to other factors and not necessarily plasma
- Adverse side-effects seen in some cases
- Banned by nearly all major global regulatory bodies.

Unscientific treatment should not be provided.

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Diverse security challenges that India faces are:

- Border security from other nations like China and Pakistan
- Cross-border terrorism
- Human trafficking
- Drugs trafficking, Arms trafficking
- fake currency smuggling across borders
- Organized crime
- Naxal rebellion
- Insurgency in North-East and Kashmir

External linkages of these security challenges are:

- 'Golden Triangle' which includes Myanmar in the east and 'Golden Crescent' which includes Pakistan, Afghanistan in the west for drug trafficking.
- Support to insurgents from China and Pakistan
- Terrorists sponsored by Pakistan
- fake currency injected mainly by Pakistan

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Internal linkages are:

↳ Naxalites linked with tribals

↳ Organized crime nexus with politicians

↳ Human trafficking to provide cheap labour for industries and homes

Given these challenges, National Security Strategy requires a comprehensive strategy, such as:

↳ Combating the risks from international actors like China and Pakistan

↳ Breaking nexus between political parties and criminals, and then bringing criminals to justice.

↳ Naxalites need to be either co-opted in development process or neutralised through security action

↳ Drug trafficking needs to be tackled along with drug addiction and rehabilitation.

↳ North-East and Kashmir insurgency requires regional development along with insulation from foreign actors.

↳ Human trafficking should be checked through border security and should be accompanied by rehabilitation of victims.

Only a comprehensive National Security Strategy can address diverse challenges.

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Critical information Infrastructure refers to most important parts of information infrastructure whose malfunction can bring down the entire economy.
Examples include power grid, telecom infrastructure, banking, etc.

Significance of critical information protection are as follows:

- Cyber warfare being focused on by countries like China to cripple economies
- Non-state actors, terrorists, hackers, etc., can damage critical infrastructure
- It ensures robustness and resilience of important sectors like banking, telecom, power, etc.
- Such protection is important for ensuring investor confidence and ease of doing business
- Can prevent huge losses, both economically and politically
- International examples, like STUXNET used by USA to cripple Iran's nuclear facilities

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Measures taken to ensure critical information protection are:

- Setting up of National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Cell (NCIIPC)
- CERT-In (Computer Emergency Response Team) and sectoral CERTs for banking and other areas
- National Cyber ~~Crime~~ Coordinational Centre (NCCC) to provide cyber intelligence
- Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) to catch hackers and other such agents
- National Technical Research Organization (NTRO) under National Security Adviser
- National Cyber Security Policy, 2013
- New division of Cyber Division within Armed Forces.
- Training of cyber security experts
- Sensitization of senior officials to follow cyber protocols in their departments

Critical Information Infrastructure needs to be protected from nefarious actors.

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① Dadabhai Naoroji left an indelible imprint on the national movement. Explain.

Dadabhai Naoroji left an indelible imprint on the national movement in the following ways:

↳ Economic Critique of British colonialism, with his 'Drain Theory' gaining wide popularity among masses

↳ Campaigning in London for Indian interests, where he set up East India Association in 1866

↳ Social and religious reform when he founded Rehnumayi Mezdayasan Sabha to work for reform among Parsis, including for women's education.

↳ Founded Indian National Congress in 1885.

↳ Using Press through his journal Rast Goftar (Among the first national leaders to do so)

↳ Established India's links with Socialism when he was invited to speak at the conference of Second International in 1904.

↳ Widely respected by both Radicals and Moderates, as seen in 1906 session; established link between these two groups

↳ Among the first proponents of Swaraj when he called for self-rule in his 1906 session address of INC

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↳ Led the Moderate Phase of India's freedom struggle from 1885 - 1905.

↳ Earned the epithet 'Grand Old Man of India' and was widely respected not just in India but across the globe.

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(2) Quit India Movement marked a new direction in the struggle against the British colonial rule in India. Analyse.

Quit India movement marked a new direction in the following ways:

↳ Goal-post had shifted from Self-rule within British empire or Dominion Status to complete detachment from British.

↳ People from Princely States participated in large numbers for the first time.

↳ Even though Communists had boycotted the call for Quit India, several Communist leaders participated thus prioritising national interest over party lines

↳ Right wing and left wing were united during the course of the movement

↳ Even though leaders were arrested and people were leaderless, spontaneous participation from masses was overwhelming.

↳ People resorted to violence and destruction of property like railways and communication lines; this violence was not condemned by Gandhiji, which marked a new trend in freedom struggle.

↳ 'Do or Die' mantra given by Gandhiji made everyone realise that end of British rule was near.

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↳ Women, Youth, Peasants and Workers participated in large numbers, thus consolidating the mass base of the movement.

↳ There were signs of dissension within the civil services and armed forces, which had never been seen earlier.

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(3) The end of World War II marked the birth of a new international order. Examine.

End of World War II marked the birth of a new international order in the following ways:

↳ United Nations was established in 1945 (as a result of Potsdam, Yalta, Tehran and Dumbarton Oaks Conference), replacing League of Nations as the premier global institution. In the political sphere of international order.

↳ Bretton Woods Institutions (World Bank and IMF) marked the western-domination in financial sphere of international order.

↳ General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) set up in 1948 ~~was~~ was the premier institution in trade & commerce sphere of international order.

↳ World dominated by two superpowers — USA and USSR.

↳ Clash between two ideologies - Capitalism (as in USA and Western Europe) and Communism (as in USSR and China)

↳ Division of world into two blocs — Capitalist bloc led by USA and Communist bloc led by USSR.

↳ Military alliances like ~~NATO~~ NATO, CENTO, SEATO of Capitalist bloc and Warsaw Pact of Communist bloc.

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↳ Nuclear Race, Arms Race, Space Race and other races between USA and USSR pushed the world to the brink of war.

↳ Proxy wars and Theatres of great games in several countries — Korea, Vietnam, Latin America, Iraq, Iran, Egypt, etc.

↳ International economic aid — Marshall Plan for Western Europe by USA and Molotov Plan for Eastern Europe by USSR — became the mainstay of diplomatic engagement.

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(4) Simla Agreement (1972) and Lahore Declaration (1999) are two key milestones in the history of Indian subcontinent. Discuss.

Simla Agreement (1972) was signed after India defeated Pakistan and liberated Bangladesh in the 1971 Indo-Pak War. It was a key milestone because:

↳ Led to liberation of Bangladesh

↳ Established Line of Control between India and Pakistan in ~~the~~ Jammu & Kashmir

↳ Established ceasefire between India and Pakistan.

↳ Prevented war from escalating when India returned Pakistan's soldiers it had captured as Prisoners of War.

↳ This Agreement is referred to as the framework for reducing Indo-Pak tensions even today.

Lahore Declaration (1999) was signed between Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Indian PM, and Nawaz Sharif, Pakistani PM. It was a key milestone because:

↳ It aimed to achieve thawing of relations between India and Pakistan.

↳ Cultural and commercial contact was sought to be established through Lahore Bus Service

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↳ Soon after Lahore Declaration, Pakistan attacked India and Kargil War (1999) happened ~~and~~. It was soon followed by 2001 Parliament attack in India by Pakistan-sponsored terrorists. This made India extremely cautious for future engagements.

↳ Closeness in relations between India and Pakistan during 2003-07 was based on the ideas and framework of Lahore Declaration.

↳ However, 26/11 attacks by Pakistan-sponsored terrorists further worsened relations.

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(5) Social security should not only involve economic empowerment but also social empowerment. Discuss in the context of India.

Social security finds mention in Article 41 of Indian Constitution which asks State to provide for welfare of the old, unemployed, disabled, women and other vulnerable sections.

Social security is usually taken to mean economic security and empowerment through following means:

↳ Pension (provided in India through Atal Pension Yojana, NPS, etc.)

↳ Insurance (provided through PM Jeevan Bima Yojana, ~~AYUPS/P~~ PM JAY, etc.)

↳ Retirement Corpus (provided through Provident Fund)

↳ Gratuity upon Retirement

↳ unemployment allowance (through MGNREGA)

However, these measures result only in economic empowerment of vulnerable individuals.

In the context of India, social empowerment is also needed because:

↳ Gender-based discrimination in a patriarchal society

↳ Caste-based discrimination in an orthodox society

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↳ Inter-religious conflict caused by communal elements

↳ Regional conflicts and inter-regional conflicts

These disabilities result in social insecurity.

Government has tried to circumvent these disabilities by providing reservation for SC/ST/OBC, female-friendly legislations and schemes, etc. However, more work is needed.

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⑥ Explain with examples how globalisation is manifested in both local in the global and global in the local.

Globalisation can be seen in both local in global and global in local, as can be seen below:

↳ FOOD

Global in the local with Pizza, Burger becoming mainstream in India.
local in Global with Achari-Do-Pyaza, Vada Pav, Samosa Burger, and other such fusion dishes.

↳ MUSIC

Rap music originated in the West and later became popular in India (Global in local)
Rap music began to be sung in vernaculars (Hindi, Punjabi, Malyali, etc.) (local in global)

↳ DRESS

Denim jeans was imported from West into India (Global in local)
It was incorporated into Indian culture and evolved styles like Kurta-jeans (local in global)

↳ FILMS

Popularity of Hollywood films in India (Global in local)
Indian actors in Hollywood movies and Hindi remake of Hollywood movies (local in Global)

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↳ LANGUAGE

English began to be prominently used in India (Global in local)

English and Hindi fused to evolve Hinglish (local in global)

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(7) In light of persistence of various forms of violence against women in India, discuss the ways in which the issue can be addressed effectively.

How violence against women in India can be addressed:

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

↳ Better implementation of laws like Domestic Violence Act, 2005, ~~and~~ Dowry (Prohibition) Act, 1961

↳ Better policing

↳ Making people aware about women's rights.

↳ Fast-track courts can be used to settle disputes

↳ Stringent punishment for offenders

↳ Rehabilitation measures for victims like Swadhar Greh scheme

SEXUAL VIOLENCE (including Sexual Harassment at Workplace)

↳ Better implementation of laws like Sexual Harassment ~~at~~ at Workplace Act, 2013, POCSO Act, 2012, CrPC, 1973, IPC, 1861, etc.

↳ Stringent punishment for offenders (recent amendment in Criminal Law to make punishment for rape stricter is a step in this direction)

↳ Rehabilitation of victims through Psychological Counselling

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↳ Victim-shaming needs to be stopped

↳ Fast-track courts for trying rape cases

~~FINANCIAL~~

ECONOMIC VIOLENCE (Not giving women access to economic resources)

↳ SHGs under DAY-NRLM

↳ Greater employment for women

↳ Maternity Benefit Act

↳ Greater skill development and education

↳ Creche's and Child-care through Anganwadi

NUTRITIONAL VIOLENCE (women often get least nutrition in house)

↳ Making people aware about benefits of women's health not just for them ~~to~~ but also for their children.

MATERNITY-RELATED VIOLENCE (which leads to high ~~MM~~ MMR)

↳ LAQSHYA, PM Surakshit Matritva Abhiyaan, PM Matru Vandana Yojana, etc.

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(8) What is an urban forest? Highlight its benefits and steps taken by the government to promote urban forestry in India.

urban forest refers to a forest located within the boundaries of an urban area.

Its benefits are as follows:

↳ Improves air quality

↳ Reduces air pollution.

↳ Recharges groundwater (not possible in other concretized areas in cities)

↳ Regulates micro-climate

↳ Reduces stress on biodiversity due to urbanization

↳ Leads to Sustainable development

↳ Increases carrying capacity of urban environment

↳ Improves aesthetic appeal of cities with open spaces and green areas

↳ Can provide resources like food, medicine, NTFP, etc. for urban poor.

↳ Can be beneficial for industrial R&D and production (particularly in pharma sector)

Measures taken by government are:

↳ Nagar Van Scheme to plant patches of forests in urban areas

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↳ Green Highways Programme

↳ Social Forestry as espoused by National Commission on Agriculture in 1976

↳ Green India Mission

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(9) How has globalization impacted the location of IT industry?

Globalisation has impacted the location of IT industry in the following ways:

↳ Spread of English through globalisation led to shifting of IT-BPO industry from USA to India (Bangalore-Hyderabad-Pune region)

↳ Free flow of investment, capital, technology under globalisation led to transfer of IT manufacturing industry to China, Japan, and other East Asian and South-East Asian countries.

↳ Free flow of immigrant labour and funds under globalisation led to Silicon Valley in California becoming the IT Centre of the world.

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(10) How can eco-tourism be used to sustainably harness the potential of tourism industry in India. Discuss challenges and steps by government.

Eco-tourism can sustainably harness the potential of tourism in India in following ways:

↳ Empowerment of local population

↳ Preservation of fragile ecosystems like mountains and beaches can boost tourism.

↳ Preservation of biodiversity like coral reefs can further enhance tourism.

Challenges in promoting eco-tourism are:

↳ lack of awareness among tourists

↳ lack of capacity among government staff to make eco-tourism possible

↳ ~~too~~ lack of funds for eco-tourism

↳ Eco-tourism can sometimes be expensive as compared to conventional tourism

↳ Lack of infrastructure like sewage treatment plants, garbage disposal systems, solid waste management systems, etc.

↳ Populations in tourist areas are often poor and cannot afford disruptions to their tourism earnings.

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Steps taken by government in this regards are:

↳ Blue Flag Certification for beaches

↳ Banning plastic in mountainous regions

↳ ~~Develop~~ Declaring Coastal Regulation Zones (CRZs), Ecologically Sensitive Zones (ESZs), Wildlife Sanctuaries and other Protected Areas that can protect ecosystem while promoting tourism.

↳ HRUDAY scheme and PRASAD scheme

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(11) The advent of Buddhism and Jainism was instrumental in the development of architecture in ancient India. Discuss.

How Buddhism helped in development of architecture in ancient India:

↳ **Buddhist Stupas**

↳ Initially, there were 9 stupas where ashes of Buddha were kept.

↳ Later, several hundred stupas came up

↳ Main centres for stupa architecture were ~~Sarnath~~ Sanchi, Nagarjunakonda, Amravati, etc.

↳ Initially, stupas were simple; later, they evolved into complicated architecture with engraved panels, sculptures, torans, vedika, harmika, chhatri, pradakshina path, medhi, etc.

↳ **BUDDHIST CHAITYAS**

↳ Chaityas were prayer halls for Buddhist monks.

↳ These developed in post-Mauryan period.

↳ Mahachaitya in Karle is a popular example

↳ They were a part of cave architecture and developed mainly in Maharashtra, MP, Odisha.

↳ Chaityas consisted of pillared halls, with apsidal roofs, usually with a stupa at the end, and engravings and paintings and sculptures on pillars and walls.

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↳ BUDDHIST VIHARAS

↳ Pillared halls with rooms for stay of Buddhist monks

↳ Often included a ~~veren~~ pillared verandah and stonescreen at ~~the~~ the entrance in a wooden facade

↳ Often located alongside Chaityas

↳ BUDDHIST CAVE ARCHITECTURE

↳ Ajanta, Ellora, Udaigiri-Khandagiri, etc.

↳ Rock-cut architecture

↳ Also had paintings on walls of caves

How Jainism was instrumental in development of architecture in ancient India:

JAIN TEMPLES

↳ In Rajasthan, Gujarat, Karnataka

JAIN BASADIS

↳ Monasteries for Jain monks in South India

JAIN CAVE ARCHITECTURE

↳ In Ellora and other places, often found alongside Buddhist caves

JAIN VIHARAS

↳ Residences for Jain monks, often located alongside Buddhist viharas

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(12) The reactionary policies of Lord Lytton and the liberal policies of his successor Lord Ripon acted as catalyst in the formation of Indian National Congress. Discuss.

Reactionary policies of lord Lytton included:

↳ Arms Act, 1878, which forbade masses from carrying Arms

↳ Afghan adventure, where Indian money and men were wasted in trying to capture Afghanistan

↳ Vernacular Press Act, 1878, which placed severe restrictions on Press and media in vernacular languages

↳ Lowering of age for Civil Services Examination

↳ Holding of Grand Durbar for Queen in Delhi in 1877 when severe famine in India

This catalysed formation of Indian National Congress because:

↳ People realised that British interests went against Indian interests

↳ Lowering of age for civil services examination hurt the educated elite; Vernacular Press Act hurt media professionals and linguistic sentiments and freedom of speech; Grand Durbar in midst of famine hurt the poor; Afghan adventure hurt the armed forces.

Thus, nearly all sections of society were impacted. This brought them closer to form INC.

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Similarly, ~~tyt~~ Ripon's liberal policies included:

↳ Ilbert Bill Controversy, where Europeans could be tried by Indian judges, setting the example of racial equality.

↳ Repeal of Vernacular Press Act

↳ More powers granted to local bodies to realise self-governance in India

This catalysed the formation of INC because:

↳ Ilbert Bill Controversy showed Indians how organized Europeans got their demands met. Indians realised they could get the same through better organization.

↳ Indians thought that some sections of British society could work for India's welfare, and organizational links were needed to influence them.

↳ Local bodies ~~becam~~ became the starting point of politicization of Indians.

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(13) Gandhiji changed his methods of struggle against the British from time to time to suit the varied circumstances and problems that needed to be tackled. Analyse.

Some of the major changes by Gandhiji in his methods of struggle included:

↳ SHIFT FROM NON-VIOLENCE TO VIOLENCE

After Chauri-Chaura incident, Non-Cooperation Movement was immediately called off in 1922. However, even when people turned violent during Quit India Movement, Gandhiji did not condemn it and blamed British for violence.

This change was because earlier, British power was absolute and mass participation was negligible. Thus, violence would be easily crushed by British. Circumstances reversed in later phase.

↳ FROM RIGHT WING TO LEFT WING AND BACK

Sometimes, Gandhiji was closer to right-wing group led by Sardar Patel.

At other times, Gandhiji was closer to left-wing group led by JL Nehru.

This was done to preserve unity of national movement, especially during 1923 No-Changer Pro-Changer struggle. When left-wing leaders like Subhash Bose were attacked and arrested by British, or when left-wing leaders would target right-wing leaders within Congress, Gandhiji would support the group under attack.

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↳ FROM NO ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION TO ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION

Initially, in 1923, Gandhi was against contesting elections because he believed in constructive work.

However, he agreed to elections in 1937 when he saw that Congress leaders had used legislatures effectively and politicization of masses increased.

↳ FROM SUPPORTING BRITAIN IN WAR TO OPPOSING IT

Initially, Gandhiji supported Britain in both World War I and II.

However, when he saw that Britain kept denying India freedom, he went against Britain and launched Quit India Movement during ~~war~~ World War II.

↳ FROM BEING PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS IN 1924 TO RESIGNING FROM IT IN 1934

He thought that he could serve national movement better by remaining outside ~~of~~ Congress.

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(14) Bring out the relationship between the industrial revolution and the advent of imperialism in different parts of the world.

Industrial revolution refers to change in the method of production where machine-based production came to dominate.
Industrial Revolution happened in Britain during 1750-1800. In France, Germany and USA, it happened during 1870-1900. In Japan, it happened during 1868-1900. In Russia, it started in its true sense in 1917.

Imperialism refers to the process of colonization where one country (colonizer) came to dominate another country economically, politically and socially. Many countries from Asia and Africa came under imperialistic influence of Europe and USA during 1900s and even before that.

Industrial Revolution led to imperialism because:
↳ Capitalists ~~so~~ needed to invest their surplus capital in new, fast-growing markets.
↳ Industrialists needed raw materials for their industries, which colonies supplied.
↳ Industrialists needed new markets for their finished manufactured goods, which was provided by colonies.

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↳ In order to safeguard their trade, supplies, and investments, political domination of these colonies was essential.

In different parts of the world, these tendencies played out in the following ways:

↳ China: Imperialistic trade with China after Opium Wars in 1850s; gave access to huge market of 600 million people.

↳ India: Huge market, capital investment in Indian Railways, raw materials of indigo, jute, cotton, etc.

↳ Africa: Initially colonised for slave trade; later for copper mines in Congo ~~and off~~ Gold in Ghana, and other such minerals

↳ Carribean islands: Colonised for sugar plantations, banana plantations and mines

↳ Indonesia, Malaysia, South-East Asia: Colonised for rubber plantations, teak, mines, ~~etc~~ spice trade, etc.

↳ Middle-East: Colonised mainly for oil

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(15) The caste system in India has continued to persist by adapting itself to a variety of changing socio-economic and political conditions in the past few decades. Discuss.

BR Ambedkar, EV Ramaswamy Naicker, Sri Narayana Guru, and other early caste-based leaders envisaged annihilation of caste. However, it is seen that caste system has tended to persist.

Changing political conditions that caste has adapted to in the past few decades:

↳ POLITICIZATION OF CASTE

Backward castes were mobilized politically to have their demands met, mainly those of selecting their own leaders, reservation in jobs and educational institutions. Prevention of Atrocities, etc.

Then Mandal Commission Report was implemented in 1989-90. It led to a new phase.

↳ CASTEIZATION OF POLITICS

In new political system where several regional parties were gaining votes, several leaders organized their parties around castes. Thus, Samajwadi Party (SP) in UP was catered mainly to Yadavs in UP; BSP catered mainly to Jatavs in UP; RJD catered mainly to Yadavs in Bihar, etc.

This system of voting for parties and candidates on the basis of caste has persisted till ~~today~~ date.

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changing socio-economic conditions that caste system has adapted to:

↳ SEGREGATION OF JOBS

Particularly in the field of manual scavenging, where most scavengers were from SC/ST. Organizations around this job like National Safai Karamchari Commission (NSKC) came up, which made caste system permanent.

↳ ABOLITION OF UNTOUCHABILITY

As envisaged in Article 17 of Constitution and implemented through SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

When recently this law was diluted by Supreme Court, there were huge demonstrations by SC/ST, showing that caste system has got entrenched.

↳ RESERVATION (in employment)

Another important rallying point for SC/ST/OBC

↳ RESERVATION (in educational institutions)

Another rallying ~~po~~ point for SC/ST/OBC

Due to these reasons, it seems that caste system has got entrenched in India.

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(16) It is argued by some that regionalism is a threat to national integrity while others consider it as a highly impactful tool in facilitating political participation. Discuss.

Regionalism refers to the process where interests of one region are contrasted with the interests of other regions. For example:

↳ Marathis v/s UP/Bihar in Maharashtra

↳ North India v/s South India in National Politics

↳ North-East India v/s Mainland India in Developmental Economics

Regionalism can be a threat to national ~~security~~ integrity because:

↳ As seen in linguistic reorganization of states, Tamil Nadu saw violent uprising against other regions.

↳ Social tensions can break out, as seen in Maharashtra when ~~Mar~~ some sections of Marathis under MNS resorted to violence against immigrants from UP and Bihar.

↳ Secession movements in North-Eastern regions is one of the ill fruits of regionalism

↳ Naxalism is an extreme form of regionalism.

↳ Tension over ~~financial~~ Finance Commission's devolution to States where South India is pitted against North India.

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↳ Khalistan movement in Punjab threatened national integrity

↳ 'Sons of soil' movement in urban centres across India

↳ Insurgency in Kashmir

However, regionalism can also ~~be~~ facilitate political participation in following ways:

↳ Both South Indian States and North Indian states participate actively in Central politics.

↳ Different regions within a state can also increase voting percentages to have their candidates elected. for ex: Political competition between Eastern UP and western UP

↳ formation of 6th Schedule areas like Bodoland Territorial Area Council with greater political participation at grassroot level because of Bodo regionalism.

Schemes like Ek Bharat, Shreshta Bharat can maintain national integrity while promoting healthy, competitive regionalism.

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(17) Natural gas has become an important primary energy source and its consumption is projected to increase further. Identify various usages of natural gas and give a brief account of its distribution.

Natural gas is a more ~~friendly~~ environmental-friendly fuel than coal or petroleum. India plans to increase its share of natural gas in total energy consumption from 6% to 15%.

Various usages of natural gas are:

↳ Cooking: Piped Natural Gas (PNG)

↳ Transport: Compressed Natural Gas (CNG)

↳ Domestic Heating: PNG

↳ Industrial Heating: PNG

↳ Fertilizers: Urea, DAP, etc. can be manufactured using Natural Gas

↳ To meet environmental sustainability targets under SDGs as it emits only one-third greenhouse gases as compared to equivalent amount of coal or petrol.

↳ To allow inclusive growth of all sections of society through:

↳ Accessible energy (through ~~pipeline~~ pipelines & gas grid)

↳ Affordable energy (cheaper than other fuels)

↳ Available energy

↳ To reduce India's import dependence for fuel and increase energy security as India produces nearly half of its ~~energy~~ natural gas requirements.

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Natural Gas is distributed in following regions globally:

↳ Middle-East: Saudi Arabia, Iran (including Farzad-B gas field), Iraq, etc.

↳ Central Asia: Turkmenistan (TAPI pipeline), Kazakhastan, ~~Kg~~ Uzbekistan, etc.

↳ South-East Asia: Vietnam, Phillippines, Indonesia, etc.

↳ Russia: Siberian gas fields

↳ South-America: Venezuela, Colombia, etc.

↳ India: Krishna-Godavari Basin

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इस भाग में कुछ न लिखे
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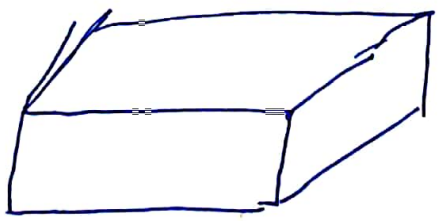
(18) Describe the process of rift valley formation, with special emphasis on the Great Rift Valley System.

Rift valley is formed through severe folding or faulting that leads to uplifting of vast sections of earth relative to its surroundings. Uplifted area is called block mountain, while low-lying area is called rift valley.

Force for this warping of earth's surface can be provided by:

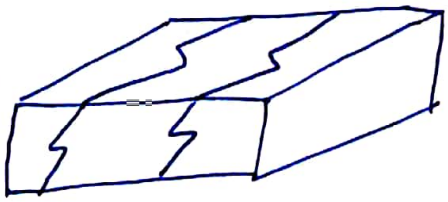
- ↳ Movement of ~~the~~ plate tectonics (as in Great Rift Valley)
- ↳ Seismic activity (Bhima fault in Maharashtra)
- ↳ Volcanic activity
- ↳ Force exerted by water, glaciers or other agents (Malda fault in Ganga-Brahmaputra basin), etc.

Step 1:



Huge block of Lithosphere

Step 2:



Severe faulting leads to cracks

faults develop

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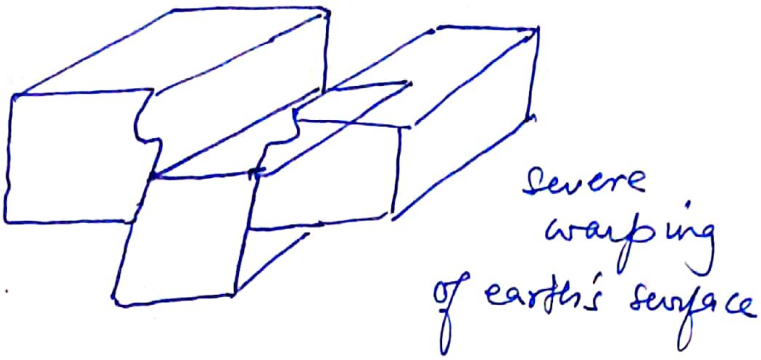
Step 3:



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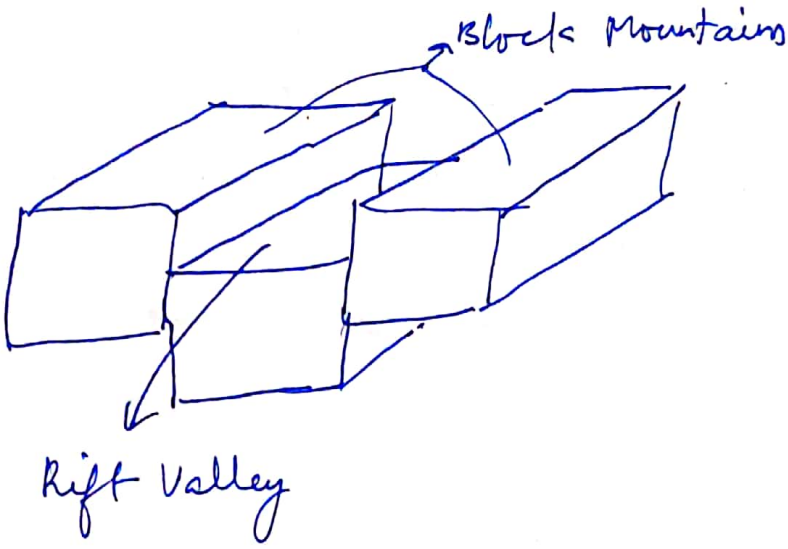

Great Rift Valley system is formed in the area of Red Sea, which represents the boundary between African Plate and Arabian Plate.

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(19) India's water resources have witnessed rapid depletion due to a mix of economic, geographic, and political factors. Explain and discuss its implications.

Economic reasons that led to depletion of India's water resources;

↳ Green Revolution which led to cultivation of paddy. (biggest water-consuming economic activity)

↳ Faulty agricultural practices, like growing water-guzzling sugarcane in water-scarce Marathawada.

↳ Water Pricing not being done despite National Water Policy, 2012, mentioning it; lack of water pricing led to indiscriminate use of water

↳ Lack of funds for developing rainwater harvesting and other storage infrastructure.

↳ Industries (like power, cement, iron & steel) consume a lot of water.

↳ Poor implementation of water conservation because of high costs.

↳ Domestic and agricultural users free to use as much water as they ~~need~~ want without any economic penalties, which leads to wastage.

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Geographic ~~to~~ factors for water depletion are:

↳ Variability of monsoon, with alternating floods and droughts, leads to water wastage

↳ Seasonal rivers in South India leads to water scarcity

~~↳ Black soil, Red & Yellow soil, laterite soil, less water~~

↳ Fast-flowing rivers in North-India which are difficult to control and store water.

Political factors for water depletion are:

↳ Inter-state disputes, like Cauvery dispute between Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu. leads to poor water management practices

↳ International conflicts like Indo-Bangladesh dispute over Teesta ~~and~~, Indo-China dispute over Brahmaputra and Sathuj, etc.

↳ Lack of political will to control use of water by farmers in agriculture.

Implications of water scarcity are:

↳ Water is a basic human right.

↳ Sanitation and hygiene difficult to maintain.

↳ Arsenic and Uranium pollution in groundwater

↳ Water-borne diseases like cholera

↳ Excess fluorine in water causes diseases

↳ Inability to locate manufacturing industries without water.

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इस भाग में कुछ न लिखें
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(20) How are plateaus formed? Also, briefly discuss the features of Deccan plateau and its economic significance.

Plateaus are flat-topped highlands. They are formed either due to uplifting of land through tectonic plate movements, and folding or faulting, or due to denudation of earlier mountains.

Deccan Plateau consists of old-fold mountains. They are formed of very stable rock. Deccan Traps cover a large portion of these plateaus. In several places, these lava flows are as much as 50-metres thick. Deccan Plateau are generally sloping from West to East. They are flanked by Western Ghats on the West and Eastern Ghats on the East. Thar Desert and Rann of Kutchch are westward extensions of Deccan Plateau, while Meghalaya Plateau and Karbi Anglong Hills are eastwards extension (separated from Rajmahal Hills by Malda fault). In the North, Aravallis and Delhi Ridge are the boundary. Deccan Plateau consist of several ~~higher~~ highlands broken ~~by~~ in different stretches. These include Kaimur Hills, Maikal Hills, Satmala Hills, Vindhyas, Satpura, Rajmahal Hills, Palconda Hills, Shevaroy Hills, Javadi Hills. Nilgiri Hills in Kerala / Tamil Nadu mark the Southern boundary. Several rivers like Mahanadi,

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Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri, etc. run through Deccan Plateau and aid in denudation and further lowering of relief.

Economic significance of Deccan Plateau is as follows:

↳ Minerals found in Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Karnataka, ~~etc.~~ Meghalaya, etc. (Minerals like coal, iron ore, copper, bauxite, uranium, etc.)

↳ Black soil is good for growing cotton

↳ Cardamom Hills good for spices and coffee plantations in South India.

↳ Rivers like Mahanadi, Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri, etc., provide water for consumption, navigation, hydroelectric power generation, etc.

↳ Tourism potential of sites like Bhimbetka in Vindhya Ranges in Madhya Pradesh.

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Registration Number : 36221

Test Number : 1418

GS Mains 2020 Test Series — 15 Nov 2020

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इस भाग में कुछ न लिखें
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① Discuss the need to strengthen National Commission for Scheduled Castes to tackle the problems faced by Scheduled Castes in India.

Problems faced by Scheduled Castes in India are:

↳ Caste-based discrimination
- ↳ in access to residence
- ↳ in access to wells, bathing ghats, water tanks and other water sources

↳ Atrocities by other castes

↳ low income levels

↳ low education levels

↳ Institutionalized discrimination

↳ Poor health standards (IMR, MMR, etc.)

Why (National Commission for Scheduled Castes) NCSC needs to be strengthened to tackle these and other problems:

↳ Currently, NCSC has only advisory powers. As such, problems cannot be tackled effectively.

↳ NCSC cannot take harsh decisions because its independence is negatively impacted:

- ↳ Appointment by President (not a Committee including judiciary & opposition)
- ↳ Serving on the pleasure of the President and can be removed anytime (no safeguards)
- ↳ Tenure, salary and other conditions of service decided by President

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↳ President only places an 'action taken' report in Parliament along with NCSC's annual report.

↳ Parliament has no means to enforce NCSC's decisions on Executive.

↳ Supreme Court recently said that only a few SCs have benefitted from reservation. This requires inclusion and exclusion powers to be given to NCSC.

↳ ~~NC~~ Enforcing mechanism for NCSC's orders in grievance-cases needs to be strengthened.

Article 338 of Indian Constitution needs to be adequately amended to make NCSC more effective.

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इस भाग में कुछ न लिखें
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(2) Does the Representation of People's Act ensure an effective mechanism against criminalization of politics in India? Discuss.

Representation of People's Act, 1951, ~~covers~~ (RPA) covers various election offences, election petitions, disqualifications criteria, etc. that could ~~lead to~~ work against criminalization of politics in India. ~~are~~ Some such mechanisms within RPA are:

↳ Section 8 of RPA, 1951

↳ It disqualifies those who have been convicted with sentences of more than two years from being MPs or MLAs.

↳ Earlier, such people could file an appeal in higher courts and get a stay. However, in Lily Thomas case, 2013, Supreme Court nullified this provision within Section 8(4)

↳ Disqualifications:

↳ RPA contains several disqualifications (as per provisions of Article 102 and 191) for candidates standing in elections. These include:

↳ Dowry, Sati, Untouchability

↳ Election offences like bribing voters, creating communal hatred, etc.

↳ Murder, Rape and other heinous crimes

↳ Powers to Election Commission (EC)

↳ Under these powers, EC has mandated political parties to declare criminal antecedents of their ~~cases~~ candidates.

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↳ Election Petitions can be filed under RPA if a disqualified criminal gets elected to Parliament or State Legislature.

RPA, 1951 needs to be strengthened to prevent criminalization of politics as per recommendations of Vohra Committee, Padmanabiah Committee and Santhanam Committee.

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इस भाग में कुछ न लिखे
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(3) Discuss the challenges that are being faced by Gram Nyayalayas in their effective functioning.

Gram Nyayalaya Act, 2008, sought to set up Gram Nyayalayas across the country to aid in justice delivery.

Challenges faced by Gram Nyayalayas are:

- Gram Nyayalayas not being set up in several states (only around 200 Gram Nyayalayas set up till now)
- Orders of Gram Nyayalayas not enforced
- Lack of awareness among public
- Lack of willingness among judicial functionaries to serve in remote, rural areas
- Vacancies in Gram Nyayalayas not being filled up timely.
- Lack of support staff
- Lack of funds
- Lack of office buildings and other related infrastructure
- Lack of political will, especially among State Governments
- Appeals from Gram Nyayalayas render their orders non-final, unlike statutory provisions
- Bureaucratic apathy

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Supreme Court recently gave guidelines to set up more Gram Nyayalayas and strengthen their functioning. These should be followed.

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(4) Explain the rationale behind setting up 'Alternative Mechanisms' in ensuring effective decision-making in the governance of the country.

Alternative Mechanisms in judiciary:

- Arbitration
- Mediation
- Conciliation
- Negotiation
- Tribunals

Why these mechanisms are set up:

- Huge backlog in judiciary of 3.5 crore cases as per National Judicial Data Grid
- Poor contract enforcement leads to anti-business environment and impedes growth.
- High amount of time and cost needed to get justice through conventional judiciary.
- Lack of expertise in judiciary, especially in technical and commercial disputes.
- Access to justice needs to improve as per Article 39A of Constitution.

Alternative mechanisms in Executive (outside the purview of executive government):

- CAG
- Election Commission
- UPSC, SPSC
- 5th & 6th Schedule Areas (Autonomous District Councils)

These were set up to ensure:

- Transparency, Accountability & Reduced corruption
- Promote grassroots democracy

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Alternative mechanisms in Legislature (outside Parliament and State Legislatures):

↳ Delegated legislation by Executive

↳ 5th & 6th Schedule Areas where Parliament's or State Legislature's Acts may not apply

↳ Gram Panchayats, Urban local bodies

These were set up to ensure:

↳ Faster decision-making

↳ Lack of expertise of legislators in technical matters

↳ Promote grassroots democracy

↳ Satisfy regional political aspirations and maintain India's unity and integrity.

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इस भाग में कुछ न लिखें
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(5) The relationship between bureaucracy and democracy is both paradoxical and complementary. Comment.

How relationship between bureaucracy and democracy is paradoxical:

↳ Bureacracy, under Weberian model, is based on strict, unchanging rules and procedures.
Whereas democracy requires responsive government that can change according to people's needs.

↳ Bureaucracy promotes a strict hierarchy, with authority centralized at the top.
Whereas democracy promotes authority of all and prevents centralization of power.

↳ Bureaucracy promotes seniority-based promotion.
whereas democracy requires merit-based promotion to best serve public interests.

↳ Bureacracy takes time with its decisions to resolve procedural irregularities.
Whereas democracy wants quick decision-making.

How relationship between bureaucracy and democracy is complementary:

↳ As promotions in bureaucracy are seniority-driven,

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officials need not satisfy political bosses. This serves democracy by making public welfare paramount.

↳ Strict hierarchy of bureaucracy ensures that basic democratic principles like rule of law, equality, etc. can be implemented throughout the country without bias.

↳ Procedures of bureaucracy seek to improve transparency and accountability of government and reduce corruption and discretion, which serves democracy.

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इस भाग में कुछ न लिखें
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(6) By transforming the way governments work and reinventing people's participation in the democratic process, e-governance empowers the citizen in multiple ways. Discuss in the context of India.

How e-governance transforms the way governments work:

↳ Government data is made publicly available instead of secrecy adopted earlier.

↳ Quicker decision-making due to technological interventions

↳ Evidence-based policy making

↳ Incorporating people's feedback

How e-governance reinvents people's participation in democratic process:

↳ Online voter registration, voter awareness campaigns like SVEEP, availability of criminal data of candidates online, etc. enhances democratic process

↳ Two-way communication between government & public

↳ Public consultation through online mode can reinvent policy formulation

↳ Social audit easily possible through wide dissemination of developmental data.

e-governance empowers the citizens in following ways:

↳ Improving transparency and accountability

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↳ Improving responsiveness of government through faster public feedback.

↳ Improving effectiveness and efficiency through measures like online verification of beneficiaries, Social audit, etc.

↳ Improving people's participation through public consultation and making governance consensus-oriented.

↳ Implementing Rule of law by wide publication of all mishappenings.

↳ Overall improving good governance

NeGD 2.0 (e-Kranti) under Digital India is a huge boon in this regard.

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(7) The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, dilutes the spirit of Supreme Court's NALSA judgement towards self-determination of gender. Discuss.

In NALSA judgement, Supreme Court had said:

↳ Transgenders should have the right to self-identification

↳ Transgenders should be provided with reservation benefits

↳ Third Gender should be introduced in all government forms to publicise and respect transgender identity.

Transgender Persons Act, 2019, dilutes this spirit by:

↳ Not giving right to self-determination

↳ Certificate of transgender identity to be provided by District Magistrate (DM)

↳ No appeal mechanism against decision of ~~Sup~~ DM.

↳ No reservation benefits to transgenders.

↳ Even after Sex Reassignment Surgeries (SRS), certificate by DM required to prove transgender identity.

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However, institutional mechanisms created by the Act, including National Council for Transgender Persons headed by Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment and including 5 members from transgender community can ~~help~~ help to promote rights of transgenders.

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(8) The worthwhile goal of Universal Health Coverage can be achieved by declaring the right to health as a fundamental right. Comment.

Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is an aspiration both under UN's SDGs and WHO's Triple Billion Targets.

UHC can be achieved by declaring Right to Health as a fundamental right because:

↳ It will make it the State's responsibility to provide healthcare to all.

↳ Healthcare might become affordable. (Currently, nearly 60% of health expenditure in India is Out of Pocket Expenditure)

↳ Healthcare will be available in remote areas and bridge rural-urban divide (Currently, most of the doctors and hospitals in urban areas in private sector)

↳ Quality of healthcare can be regulated and quacks can be penalised.

↳ It will further Constitutional goals of social and economic justice.

Why Right to Health may not be able to achieve UHC:

↳ Lack of funds with government to provide healthcare to all.

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↳ Lack of skilled manpower
  ↳ Lack of doctors (especially in rural areas)
  ↳ Lack of paramedical staff
  ↳ Lack of public health officials

↳ Lack of medical infrastructure
  ↳ Hospital beds and Hospitals
  ↳ Diagnostic machines
  ↳ Therapeutic drugs manufacturing

↳ Even National Health Policy, 2017, did not declare Right to Health because of these reasons.

Right to Health and UHC should be on top of government's priority.

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(9) Indian diaspora in the Gulf countries is an asset beset with multiple challenges. Comment.

Gulf countries house nearly 10 million Indians.

How Indian diaspora in gulf countries is an asset:

- Sends remittances back home (with India being the largest recipients of remittances in the world)
- Source of soft-power (especially in countries like UAE where Indians constitute more than 10% of population)
- Promotes trade and economic relations between India and Middle-East.

How Indian diaspora in Gulf countries is beset with challenges:

- Strict, inhuman labour laws
- Anti-immigration rhetoric with Saudisation/Arabization of jobs being demanded.
- Drop in Oil Prices has hurt Gulf countries and also Indian diaspora.
- Low skills of Indian diaspora in Gulf countries.
- Low bargaining power
- Slave-like conditions
- Return of Gulf diaspora exacerbates employment and social challenges in India.

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India needs to interact with ~~the~~ Gulf Countries to safeguard interests of its diaspora.

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(10) Briefly outline the genesis and functioning of World Food Programme (WFP). Also highlight its contribution to India's effort in addressing hunger.

World Food Programme (WFP) was born in the 20th century as a part of UN's efforts to eradicate hunger, especially in LDCs and African Countries.

WFP functions mainly as follows:

- Providing aid and food relief to poor nations
- Providing a common platform for developed countries to contribute towards hunger
- Coordinating with other global organizations like FAO, WHO, IFAD, etc., to eradicate hunger and increase agricultural poverty
- Harmonizing international policies towards hunger eradication.
- Providing financial and technical assistance to poor countries to aid their policy formulation and implementation with regards to hunger.

It has contributed to India's effort in addressing hunger and malnutrition in the following ways:

- Providing technical assistance to programmes like POSHAN Abhiyaan

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↳ ~~Proving~~ Collecting data to help in evidence-based policy making

↳ Providing food & nutrition experts to guide policy makers

↳ ~~Prov~~ Channelizing financial assistance for India's PDS system and National Food Security Act.

↳ Coordinating with FAO to ~~ve~~ improve India's agricultural productivity.

↳ Coordinating with WHO to remove hidden hunger and malnutrition.

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(11) Action against civil society groups is seen as shrinking space for dissent by some while others point out to the imperatives of merit-based action against certain groups. Examine with examples.

'Civil Society' is often seen as the third pillar of governance after public sector and private sector.

Action against civil society groups has often taken the following forms:

- Strict implementation of Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA)
- Recent amendments in FCRA which further tighten funding, registration and expenditure norms for NGOs.
- Cancellation of registration of several NGOs
- Investigations and raids by agencies like CBI
- Representation in Supreme Court against NGOs citing the fact that more than 90% of the nearly 3 million NGOs operational in India do not declare and file ~~Tax~~ Income Tax Returns.
- Arresting officials and executives of NGOs, sometimes even under preventive detention.
- Denying visas to foreign experts

Such action against civil society is sometimes seen as shrinking space for dissent because:

- Withdrawing permission to visit troubled areas, like Amnesty International was prohibited from visiting Kashmir, Naxal and other areas.

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↳ Genuine voices suppressed through high-handed police action

↳ Reports discredited and criticised, as seen in the World Press Freedom Index ~~too~~ of Reporters Without Borders being criticized.

↳ Concerns of tribals and other vulnerable sections disregarded, as seen in the arrest of leaders of Narmada Bachao Andolan, including Medha Patkar.

However, at times, certain groups have worked against Indian interest, like:

↳ Environmental terrorism against India's industrial projects by Greenpeace International, which impedes India's growth

↳ Communal hatred being spread by entities like foundation for Communal Harmony in the name of preserving pluralism.

↳ Illicit funds being channeled into India to foment dissent, violence and serve interests of foreign powers.

↳ Elections being interfered with by political civil society groups which undermines Indian democracy.

Civil society should be promoted with safeguards as per National Voluntary Sector Policy.

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इस भाग में कुछ न लिखें
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(12) Discuss the implications associated with Prime Minister's Office acting as the most powerful office due to its formidable influence in policy-making in India.

In recent times, centralization of authority in PMO has been observed.

Its positive implications are:

↳ Quicker and effective decision-making.

↳ Reduction of policy-paralysis

↳ Reduction of unscientific, populist schemes like free laptops, mobile phones, etc.

↳ Less chances of corruption as corruption is more at local level than at Central level

↳ Greater access to resources (funds) for implementing decisions

↳ Uniformity of policy across the country so that basic minimum can be ensured for all.

↳ Experts and Skilled manpower can be efficiently consulted.

↳ Higher efficiency, with less time and cost overruns

↳ Unified policy-making approach instead of fragmented, piece-meal policies earlier (as seen in transport, where fragmented policies by several ministries like Roads, Railways, Shipping, Civil Aviation, etc.)

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Its negative implications are:

- Results in over-centralization of authority
- Goes against Federalism, which is a basic feature of Indian Constitution
- Goes against the concept of decentralized planning and grassroots democracy through Panchayats
- Adopts "one-size-fits-all" approach which may not be suitable for ~~a co~~ such a diverse country as India.
- Does not provide customised solutions based on regional factors
- Threatens imposition of dictatorship.
- Goes against Parliamentary system of democracy where the Council of Ministers should ~~tot~~ collectively wield authority.
- Multi-stakeholder consultations avoided
- Can lead to inter-regional tensions due to political favoritism.

All opinion should be accommodated and decentralized planning should be promoted.

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(13) While judiciary's efforts to infuse accountability in the functioning of government institutions and engender human rights jurisprudence demonstrate the importance of judicial governance, it also leads to concerns around judicial overreach. Discuss.

Judiciary's efforts to infuse accountability and engender human rights can be seen in various judgements of Supreme Court like Right to Education, Right to Information, Right to Privacy, Right to Clean Environment, etc., especially under Articles 14, 19 and 21 of Constitution.

It shows importance of judicial governance because:

- Executive might not be open to transparency and greater accountability. Here, judicial intervention becomes important, as in Right to Information
- Executive might try to assume excess power, as seen in Aadhaar Act, 2016, whose provisions were struck down by Supreme Court to protect Right to Privacy.
- Executive might wilt against populist pressure. ~~as seen in~~ Here, judicial neutrality becomes important.
- Executive has to listen to political party, opposition and alliance partners. Thus, important reforms like GST may take years to get passed. Judiciary can help speed up this process.

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↳ Executive needs to be kept under checks and balances, otherwise tyrannical situation of 1970s Emergency might get repeated. Judiciary can provide checks ~~and~~ and balances.

However, it can also lead to judicial overreach:

↳ In Golaknath case of 1967, Supreme Court said that Parliament cannot amend fundamental rights. Many call this judgement as judicial overreach

↳ In Right to Property vs Land Reforms of 1950s and 1960s, judicial overreach hampered public welfare.

↳ Sometimes, judiciary has engendered human rights that India did not have the capacity to implement. for eg: In 1990s, Supreme Court granted citizens the Right to Education upto Secondary level, which was not been implemented even today.

↳ Issue of "selected" judiciary vs "elected" representatives in a democracy.

Judiciary is an important pillar of governance. As such, it should exercise its powers with caution and care.

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(14) The power to punish for contempt of courts is necessary for the administration of justice. Critically analyze.

The power to punish for contempt of court is found in Articles 129 and 215 of Indian Constitution. It is implemented through Contempt of Courts Act of 1971.

It is necessary for ~~the~~ administration of justice because:

↳ Breach of undertaking given to courts can be punished

↳ Scandalising the authority of courts ~~and~~ can attract criminal punishment

↳ Obstructing with judicial proceedings can be prevented.

↳ Interference with administration of justice can be stopped.

↳ false testimonies and affidavits can be deterred

↳ Integrity of justice and criminal system can be ensured.

↳ Orders of Court can be implemented throughout the territory of India without fear.

↳ Authority and powers of court can be protected.

↳ Ensures checks and balances on Executive; without contempt powers, Executive can simply ignore judiciary.

However, contempt powers may be outdated in modern justice administration because:

↳ No codification of contempt powers often leads ~~to~~ to discretion of judiciary

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↳ Contempt powers are often utilized against fair criticism ~~or defamation~~ of judiciary or defamation of individual judges

↳ Recent contempt proceedings in Prashant Bhushan case exposed high-handedness of judiciary.

↳ Internationally, countries like UK and Canada no longer use contempt powers.

↳ fear of contempt often leads to stifling of dissent

↳ Can lead to tyranny of judiciary

↳ Checks and balances on judiciary are weakened.

Contempt proceedings should be ~~resto~~ resorted to only in cases of extreme urgency.

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(15) What are the legal concerns associated with custodial violence? Discuss the challenges in curbing such incidents. Suggest some ways to address this issue.

Custodial violence refers to the violence inflicted on prison inmates and other arrested people by police.

Legal concerns associated with custodial violence are:

- Right to life with dignity under Article 21 is violated
- Public trust in police and government is eroded.
- Extreme cases even result in custodial deaths.
- All basic fundamental, human rights are violated
- Goes against international conventions like UN Convention against torture
- It is often the poor and marginalized that face custodial violence.
- India's image and soft power in international arena is damaged.
- Most of the people under police custody are undertrials (nearly two-thirds of all prisoners). Thus, even innocent people may be victims.
- Recent case of death of ~~B~~ father-son duo in Tamil Nadu exposed the worst forms of custodial violence.

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↳ Goes against UN Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, etc.

Challenges in curbing such incidents are:

↳ Opaqueness in police functioning.

↳ It is often police that inquires into cases of custodial violence by police. This leads to conflicts of interest.

↳ Issue of national security vs individual's rights. For eg: can a terrorist claim protection under these rights if he is hiding terror plans?

↳ lack of monitoring mechanisms in jails.

↳ Political-police nexus and lack of political will

↳ Often, ~~publi~~ tacit acceptance of public, as seen in ~~deat~~ custodial death of Vikas Dubey and death of four rape accused in Hyderabad

↳ lack of powers with NHRC to enquire

Some ways to address this issue:

↳ ~~Sign~~ Ratify UN Convention ~~and~~ Against Torture and promote international cooperation

↳ Sensitize police functionaries

↳ Improve monitoring, especially through video recording

↳ Supreme Court guidelines on custodial violence (like investigation of such cases by another non-related police ~~un~~ unit) should be followed.

↳ NHRC needs to be strengthened to enquire into human rights violations.

↳ Public awareness campaigns to ensure accountability.

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(16) Civil society interventions, ranging from confrontation to engagement with the government, have played an important role in ushering transparency and accountability in governance in India. Discuss with examples.

Civil society is regarded as third pillar of governance after public sector and private sector.

Civil society's confrontations with government have helped in:

- ↳ Resettlement and Rehabilitation, as seen in Narmada Bachao Andolan
- ↳ Environmental safeguards, as seen in protests by Greenpeace-International NGO
- ↳ Human Rights violations in Kashmir, North-East, Naxal areas, as seen in protests by Amnesty International
- ↳ Labour law Reforms, as seen in criticism by Labour Unions
- ↳ Right to Information granted due to protests by Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangatham (MKSS)
- ↳ Corruption checked due to vigilance by media organizations

Civil society's engagement with governance has helped in:

- ↳ Mid-Day Meal scheme, where the work of Akshay Patra foundation is exemplary.
- ↳ RTI Watch, an NGO, and similar other NGOs, which help people in filing RTIs.

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(17) When it comes to hunger, India faces the paradox of plenty. Discuss. Also suggest ways in which this concern can be addressed.

India is a food-surplus country. It can be seen through following facts:

- India is a net exporter of foodgrains
- India is the second largest producer of rice, largest producer of fruits & vegetables, among top 3 producers of fish, among top 10 producers of wheat, etc., in the world
- India has overflowing FCI godowns, excess procurement of foodgrains under PDS, excess buffer stocks in excess of 70 MMT.
- Under National Food Security Act (NFSA), India has given Right to Food to nearly two-thirds of its population.

However, still India faces concerns of hunger and malnutrition:

- Nearly 53% of women in reproductive age are anaemic (iron deficiency)
- ~~35~~ 36% of children are stunted
- 20% of children are wasted
- 38% of children are underweight
- Poor nutrition of ~~wo~~ pregnant women is one of the leading causes of high Maternal Mortality and Infant Mortality.

Thus, India faces the paradox of plenty in hunger.

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Ways in which this concerns can be addressed are:

- Strict implementation of government schemes, like
  - POSHAN Abhiyaan
  - National Nutrition Mission of NITI Aayog
  - National food Security Act (NFSA)
- Reforming PDS to remove inclusion and exclusion errors through biometric-based authentication
- Food fortification (looking at the success of iodised salt)
- Raising awareness of public regarding balanced diet
- Mid-Day Meal scheme should be expanded to secondary school.
- More crops under PDS, including millets, jowar, bajra, ragi, pulses, etc. to reduce hidden hunger
- Collecting data on malnutrition to support evidence-based policy making.
- Focusing on nutrition of pregnant women through schemes like Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana.
- Involving nutrition experts in policy formulation
- Promoting healthy habits like kitchen gardens, as done in Mid Day Meal scheme.

Eradicating hunger would go a long way in helping India achieve SDGs.

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(18) What is the role of wage employment in alleviating poverty? How is MGNREGA different from earlier Wage Employment Programmes in India?

Role of wage employment in alleviating poverty:

↳ Helps augment incomes, which directly reduces poverty

↳ Provides security of income

↳ Helps protect against uncertainties of agriculture and poor growth of MSMEs.

↳ Provides ~~an~~ social security and insurance against medical shocks and other mishaps.

MGNREGA is different from earlier Wage Employment Programmes because:

↳ Right to Employment provided under MGNREGA

↳ Social audit to ensure transparency & accountability

↳ Geo-Tagging to ensure durability of assets created

↳ Minimum of 60% of MGNREGA's expenditure to be on wages

↳ Durable assets created

↳ Convergence with other schemes like water ~~Success of MGNREGA can~~ conservation, drought relief, road construction, etc.

Success of MGNREGA can be seen from the fact that similar legislation is now being demanded for urban areas.

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↳ Public awareness campaigns on government schemes by NGOs

Civil society needs to play an active role to usher in transparency and accountability in India.

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(19) China's aggressiveness in recent times presents not only challenges to India but also opportunities to strengthen itself internationally and domestically. Discuss.

China's aggressiveness in recent times is a challenge to India because:

- Border tensions, with unilateral Chinese incursions into Ladakh
- Earlier disputes, like Doklam stand-off, also due to China's aggressiveness
- India's sea lanes of communication in South China Sea can be negatively impacted; it is through here that a significant portion of India's trade passes
- India has to increase its defence expenditure and divert resources away from social welfare.
- Possibility of a two-front war with Pakistan & China
- CPEC in Pakistan passes through PoK and hurts India's sovereignty.
- Huge trade deficit with China due to aggressive trade policies of China and aggressive protectionism of its domestic market
- China's encirclement of India through String of Pearls is a strategic challenge.
- Because of China's aggression, India is moving closer to USA. This can impact Indo-Russia and Indo-Iran relations, and can also hurt India's strategic autonomy.

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How China's aggression can help India internationally:

- China's aggressive debt-trap diplomacy has made countries like Maldives and Sri Lanka move closer to India. Maldives now has India-first policy.
- Coalition of like-minded countries like USA, Japan, Australia, with India, in the form of QUAD
- Japan has started joint projects with India in other countries, like Asia-Africa Growth Corridor
- Demands are being raised to include India as permanent member of UN Security Council to counter China.
- Initiatives like Supply Chain Resilience Initiative, Blue Dot Network, etc., as a counter to China's BRI and China-centric manufacturing can help shift global value chains to India.
- US has started focusing on Indo-Pacific instead of Asia-Pacific, which provides boost to India.

How China's aggressiveness can help India domestically:

- Focus on 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (self-reliant India)
- Boycott of Chinese products and apps has helped soften trade deficit
- ~~Made in~~ Make in India platform strengthened
- Bipartisan support against China's border incursions and in favour of military upgradation and border infrastructure.

India must utilise these opportunities fully.

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(20) Trade and connectivity hold the key for India to better engage its neighbours. Examine the opportunities and challenges in South Asia in this context.

Regional trade in South Asia is only 5% of its global trade. This figure is 35% for East Asia and 60% for Europe.

Trade and connectivity can help India's engagement with neighbours through following opportunities:

- ↳ BBIN MVA (Motor Vehicles Agreement) can help India's engagement with Bhutan, Bangladesh and Nepal.
- ↳ Kaladan Multimodal Transport project will help India engage with Myanmar
- ↳ India - Myanmar - Thailand Trilateral Highway.
- ↳ Protocol on Inland Water Transit & Trade (PIWTT) between India and Bangladesh
- ↳ Maritime connectivity under BIMSTEC
- ↳ Land-based connectivity with Afghanistan and other nations under SAARC.
- ↳ SAARC FTA (Free Trade Agreement) is an opportunity for increasing regional trade.
- ↳ BIMSTEC FTA is under discussion
- ↳ RCEP under ASEAN is also an option to engage with neighbours like China and Myanmar.
- ↳ Integrated Check Posts and Border Haats can improve trade with neighbours
- ↳ Regional trade is only 5% of global trade, which shows considerable room for improvement.

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↳ Export/Import of Power between India, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka can aid engagement.

Challenges for in increasing trade and connectivity in South Asia are:

↳ Geographical constraints, with Bhutan and Nepal being mountainous countries, Sri Lanka separated by water, and Pakistan in between India and Afghanistan.

↳ Lack of complementarity, as most South Asian nations are developing economies with poor industrial base. In fact, India and Bangladesh compete for textile exports in the world.

↳ Huge trade deficit that India has with China has made India cautious of opening up

↳ Political tensions between India-Pakistan, Bangladesh-Pakistan, Bhutan-Pakistan, etc., which has stalled SAARC and other trade and connectivity programs.

↳ Demographic issues, like Tamils in Sri Lanka, Rohingyas in Myanmar, etc., has hindered connectivity.

↳ Lack of funds in developing nations of South Asia to spend on connectivity

↳ Lack of skilled manpower

↳ Harmful domestic politics, like political parties in Nepal fanning anti-India sentiments.

South Asian countries can benefit from regional integration.

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